The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 24, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WHOLE NO. 1659 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 4

AFL-CIO Pact On Jurisdictional Disputes Is Ratified; Executive Council Charts New Social Security Program; Calls on Congress To Defeat All Anti-Labor Proposals

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

The American Federation of Labor is committed to an undeviating effort to achieve organic labor unity in the United States. This was made clear by President Green at a press conference in Miami during the mid-winter session of the Executive Council.

Mr. Green characterized the final ratification of the AFL-CIO agreement to arbitrate jurisdictional disputes involving affiliates of the two organizations as merely a first, preliminary step toward the ultimate goal of merging the AFL and CIO into a single, united labor movement.

As evidence of good faith, the next step toward peace should be a supplementary agreement ending raiding by rival unions in the two folds. This was recommended by the Executive Council as a fundamental organizational policy. It would result in a virtual truce, or armistice, and unquestionably would promote better feeling. Furthermore, when so many millions of American workers still are unorganized it does not seem sensible for a union affiliated with either side to attempt to encroach upon a plant or factory or shipyard where another bona fide union is already established and has contractual relations with the management.

The Supreme Objective

Mr. Green emphasized, however, that this, too, is just another preliminary step and that the AFL will never relax its efforts until the supreme objective of organic unity is won.

He declined to hazard a prediction as to when such a merger could be accomplished. He pointed out that many knotty problems and obstacles still remain in the path of labor peace. But these difficulties, instead of discouraging labor leaders, should inspire them with an unconquerable determination to keep trying to find a workable solution.

This determination was clearly in evidence at the AFL council meeting and it was the motivating principle behind the council's action. The leaders of the AFL were extremely provoked by the CIO's current raid on the Kaiser shipyards in the northwest and by several other unjustifiable attacks on established AFL unions, but they did not let this upsetting situation deter them from driving forward toward the main objective.

There is no longer any good reason for a divided labor movement in America. There are no longer any basic cleavages of policy or purpose between the AFL and the CIO. The fact that the two organizations have been able to unite on practically every major issue arising from the war emergency proves that.

But there are many reasons why a divided labor movement can be dangerous to the welfare of all union workers and to the best interests of the nation. The enemies of labor are on the alert. They may be able to make progress while the ranks of labor are split, but they will never succeed in denting a united front.

More Action, Less Talk

We confess that we'd like to see a little more enthusiasm for labor unity from the CIO leadership. We'd like to see more action and less lip service in cementing friendlier relations. We believe this will be forthcoming as a natural result of the steps toward peace already taken by the respective peace committees of the two organizations and the new developments that will result when negotiations are resumed.

Lest anyone get the idea that the AFL's desire for labor unity springs from a feeling of weakness, we hasten to cite the latest membership report made public by Secretary-Treasurer George Meany at Miami.

This report shows that the dues-paid membership of the AFL at the close of 1942 was the highest figure in the history of the Federation—5,954,434. That represents a gain of more than a million members in 1942 and a gain of more than three million members since the CIO went its separate way. We wonder whether the CIO, which started with a nucleus of a million former AFL members, has gained three million dues-paying new members since that time. We don't know because the CIO has never made public a report on its dues-paid membership, but we are inclined to doubt whether it can match the AFL gains.

The fact remains that the AFL is now the largest labor organization in the world. Despite that, it is not too proud to renew its invitation to those who left it to return and find a hearty welcome awaiting them.

A Salute From The Army

Miami, Fla.—The American Federation of Labor received a notable salute from the U. S. Army in the form of a letter from Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson giving high praise to the production achievements of AFL war workers.

The letter, sent to President William Green during the session of the Executive Council, follows:

"Dear Mr. Green:

"I hope you will present my greetings to the members of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, and my best wishes for a successful meeting.

"Through you, the Army congratulates the millions of members of the Federation on the important contribution they are making to the cause of a United Nations victory.

"The planes, weapons, radio equipment and other manufactured products American Federation of Labor workers are building are performing splendidly in battle. The machine tools and parts which you produce for the factory front are no less invaluable.

"The Army is especially grateful to those members of the Federation who helped us to rush to completion the barracks, hangars, arsenals and factories without which we could not have trained our troops and made our munitions. In a like manner, your members who are engaged in transportation and warehousing have helped us to speed supplies to the fronts and to our allies.

"No history of the present conflict could be written without adequate mention of labor's importance in tipping the scales of military power. From every front come reports every day of the fighting achievements of weapons made by members of the American Federation of Labor.

"According to a dispatch from Guadalcanal, enemy bombing on our positions always ceases after the arrival of your P-38 Lightning planes. 'It was evident,' the dispatch said, 'that enemy aircraft avoided, as much as possible, actual combat with the P-38s.' The Federation has reason to be proud of the splendid record being made by the Lightnings, the Flying Fortresses, the Liberators and all the other planes which are made by members of your organization.

"With the equipment you have furnished us, we have come a long way on the road to building an adequate offensive arsenal. We are counting on free labor to continue supplying us with the weapons to keep America free.

"Sincerely yours,
"(Signed) ROBERT P. PATTERSON,
Under Secretary of War."

Green Urges Generous Contributions To Aid Infantile Paralysis Victims

Miami, Fla.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor, in an address here over the Mutual Broadcasting System, stressed the importance of large contributions this year to the fund being raised by the National Foundation For Infantile Paralysis in connection with the celebration of President Roosevelt's Birthday.

"Each year at this time," Mr. Green said, "the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis reminds the people of our country that the fight against that dread disease is still in progress and can only be continued with their help.

"And, just as in past years, the six million members of the American Federation of Labor are glad to respond with generous contributions of their hard-earned dollars for this noble cause.

"Infantile paralysis is a fearful and mysterious scourge. It is no respecter of persons. It attacks the rich and poor, the weak and strong alike. It strikes with greatest force in the wake of wars and it hits hardest at our children.

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor adopted this afternoon a formal resolution calling upon all unions affiliated with our organization to urge their members to contribute to this campaign. The Executive Council noted that aside from the gifts of individual members, the unions themselves will send in substantial donations.

"More than a month ago I wrote to the President and informed him that the six million members of the American Federation of Labor would consider it a pleasure to be permitted again to give their wholehearted support to the fund-raising campaign of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. He replied in part:

"'Labor's active participation in a cause which is so close to my heart has always been noteworthy and I am certainly very grateful that the men and women of your affiliated organizations will endeavor to make this year's fund-raising drive an outstanding success.'

"Therefore, I appeal to each and every member of the American Federation of Labor to make good on our pledge. By so doing you will be protecting your own children and family against a fearful disease and you will be helping to make your country a finer and healthier place to live, in the years to come."

We're The Tops

Miami, Fla.—Secretary-Treasurer George Meany reported to the Executive Council that the total dues-paid membership in the American Federation of Labor reached an all-time high of 5,954,434 at the close of last month.

This makes the American Federation of Labor the largest trade union organization in the world and represents a gain of 1,059,691 members in the 12 months since Dec. 31, 1941, when the AFL membership stood at 4,894,743.

The gain since the last reported membership at the end of the Federation's fiscal year on Aug. 31, 1942, was 471,853 new members.

Further comparisons show that the AFL has more than doubled its membership since 1937, when the organizations that went over to the CIO were dropped from the Federation's rolls. The AFL's dues-paid membership gains since that time total 3,095,504.

Mr. Meany emphasized the fact that the all-time high membership which he announced is not a claimed or estimated membership, but an official figure based on per capita dues payments appearing on the Federation's books which are audited periodically. The figures are included in the Federation's financial reports, which are available in public libraries all over the country.

The membership total, Mr. Meany further pointed out, does not include a considerable floating and unemployed membership, plus several hundred thousand union workers in the armed forces of the nation who are excused from paying dues during their period of service.

The Executive Council expressed its approval of the progress shown in the membership report, but directed that the Federation's organizing activities be continued at full momentum in order to bring the benefits of unionism to millions of American workers who are still unorganized.

Congressional Leaders Requested To Block Anti-Labor Legislation

Miami, Fla. — Attempts by reactionary Congressmen to force adoption of anti-labor legislation destructive to the nation's war effort were denounced by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor. The Council sent the following telegram to the Vice President, the Speaker, and Democratic and Republican leaders of both houses of Congress:

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor urges you to exert constructive leadership to prevent the enactment of dangerous and foolhardy anti-labor measures now being proposed in Congress.

"These bills would destroy the basic freedoms of American workers, impair labor standards and handcuff the efforts of loyal trade unions to expedite the war production program.

"If a group of soldiers were to go A.W.O.L., the War Department would never think of placing the entire army in the guard house. Yet this would be precisely the effect of anti-strike legislation now being advanced. It would penalize more than 99 per cent of the nations soldiers of production who have remained steadfastly on the job for the acts of a small minority.

"Even in normal times the American Federation of Labor is opposed to strikes except as a last resort to remedy injustice. In the present war crisis, we are opposed to strikes for any cause. But we will fight to the limit of our strength to preserve the right to strike, which is just as fundamental a democratic freedom as the right of free speech and free press. We are proud of the record the six million members of the Federation have made in avoiding strikes since Pearl Harbor. The amazing progress of war production, as reported by the President to Congress, speaks volumes for the success of labor's voluntary cooperation with the war effort and should make it apparent that compulsory methods are unnecessary as well as un-American.

"We oppose impairment of the 40-hour week standard for overtime compensation because it would not add a single hour of work in war production and would result only in a pay cut for our loyal production soldiers. If their income is reduced in this manner, they will be forced to seek upward revisions of their basic pay scales to make up for the loss. This would upset the entire wage stabilization program.

"We also urge you to consider the dangerous effects of legislation aimed at strangling our trade union organizations. These unions have cooperated fully with the Government during the war crisis and have solved many manpower and operational problems which threatened to impede the war effort. If they are now placed in a legal straitjacket, the war production program is bound to suffer.

"We appeal to you to let our trade unions continue to give constructive service to the nation, unhampered by restrictive legislation.

"We confidently expect you will give these recommendations your careful and sympathetic consideration and we assure you of labor's unreserved support of every Government program necessary for victory."

Help The Red Cross!

Miami, Fla.—The AFL Executive Council gave its full endorsement to the 1943 War Fund Campaign of the American Red Cross in the following statement:

"President Roosevelt has designated March as Red Cross Month. The goal of the War Fund Campaign is 125 million dollars, which represents the emergency budget for Red Cross national and international services during the coming year.

"A large part of this fund will be spent for direct aid to the armed forces of the United States here and abroad. The Red Cross is the only agency operating on American military reservations. This work is vital to our boys on the battlefields.

"Likewise the Red Cross is the only agency through which we can communicate and send relief to American soldiers and civilians held as prisoners of war or in detention camps in enemy territory.

"At the same time, the Red Cross is carrying on war relief work in other countries and it stands ready at a moment's notice to help victims of disasters.

"We urge every member of the American Federation of Labor to contribute to the Red Cross fund this year and we call upon all local and state organizations of the American Federation of Labor to give the drive their organized support. We note with approval that United Nations Relief has pledged the cooperation of its national and regional offices in soliciting contributions from union members and that arrangements have been made to record all such donations in the name of the union designated by the donors."

VAN ARSDALE'S CONVICTION VOIDED BY APPEALS COURT

Albany, N. Y.—A decision by the Court of Appeals here unanimously reversed the conviction of Harry Van Arsdale, business manager of Local 3, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, on a charge of inciting to riot during a strike against the Triangle Conduit & Cable Company in 1940.

Van Arsdale was found guilty on one count, after a parade of company officials, private dicks and scabs had testified that violence was provoked by the union. The appeals court held that the evidence had been "legally insufficient to prove his guilt of the single count upon which he stands convicted."

Sentenced to prison for from 1 to 2 years under a 147-year-old anti-rioting law never before invoked, Van Arsdale continued at his union post pending the outcome of his appeal.

OPTICAL COMPANY WINS ARMY-NAVY "E" AWARD

Washington, D. C.—Secretary William J. McConnell of Optical Workers Union No. 18579, Rochester, N. Y., advised AFL President William Green that the Ilex Optical Company of Rochester, whose employes are members of the AFL union, has been awarded the Army-Navy "E" for outstanding achievement in war production.

In a statement to the newspapers, Rufus Rosenbloom, president of the company, and Jacques Levinson, assistant to the president, paid tribute to the cooperation of the union in gaining the coveted award.

Freedom From Want Is Goal of New Security Bill

Miami, Fla.—Officers of the American Federation of Labor were instructed by the Executive Council to draft and seek enactment by Congress of a broad, five-point social security program to free the American people from fear of want.

At the same time, the Council appealed to all AFL unions and their members to urge their Representatives and Senators in Congress to vote for the new measure.

The Council's statement follows:

"When President Roosevelt, in his message to Congress on the state of the Nation, called for immediate action to establish freedom from want in America, he echoed the unanimous determination of the six million members of the American Federation of Labor.

"It has long been organized labor's No. 1 objective to safeguard the working masses of our people and their families from the spectre of poverty and destitution. We advocated and sponsored the original social security program in this country and since its enactment we have constantly sought its expansion and improvement.

"During the last session of Congress, the American Federation of Labor drafted and caused to be introduced a series of amendments to the Social Security Act which would have resulted in a long step forward toward the attainment of the goal of freedom from want "from the cradle to the grave." This bill was buried in the rush of emergency war legislation.

"We hereby direct the officers of the American Federation of Labor to place before Congress at the earliest possible moment a new and even broader measure to carry out labor's and the President's objectives. This measure should incorporate the following major features:

"1—Coverage of all employed persons in the United States and members of their families not at present provided for by either municipal, state, county or federal law. At present, millions of Americans—including such large groups as domestic and agricultural workers—are not protected by the social security program.

"2—Increase in old age annuity benefits which at present are fixed at sub-standard levels.

"3—Standardization of unemployment compensation benefits on a single nation-wide basis. This is particularly needed now when so many workers have left their home states to take war jobs in other communities at the Government's urging.

"4—Health disability and hospitalization insurance for workers and members of their families.

"5—Unemployment insurance coverage for members of the armed forces of the United States, to protect them during the period after the war when they are discharged from the services and start looking for jobs in industry.

"This broad program will have to be financed by higher taxes, both from employes and employers. Workers will be glad to pay these taxes because they know it will protect them against the hazards of the future. These higher taxes can be substituted for the unpopular and unwieldy Victory tax and the immediate proceeds used to defray part of the heavy cost of carrying on the war to a victorious conclusion.

"We urge all members and union organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor to do their utmost to impress upon their Representatives and Senators in Congress the imperative need for prompt enactment of this social security program."

W. C. DOHERTY IS ELECTED 13TH AFL VICE PRESIDENT

Miami, Fla.—The Executive Council elected President William C. Doherty of the National Association of Letter Carriers to the 13th Vice Presidency of the American Federation of Labor.

Mr. Doherty succeeds former Vice President Edward J. Gainor, who resigned because of ill health. Mr. Gainor also was Mr. Doherty's predecessor as head of the letter carriers' organization.

WATT NAMED TO BOARD OF ARBITRATION GROUP

New York.—Robert J. Watt, international representative of the American Federation of Labor and labor member of the National War Labor Board, has been elected to the board of directors of the American Arbitration Association, it was announced here by Lucius R. Eastman, chairman of the board of the association. Matthew Woll, AFL vice president, is also a member of the directorate.

Council Urges No-Raiding Agreement As Next Step to Organic Labor Unity

Miami, Fla.—The Executive Council climaxed a busy week by ratifying an agreement between the AFL and CIO providing for arbitration of jurisdictional disputes involving unions affiliated with the two organizations.

This agreement was tentatively drawn up by the Peace Committees representing the AFL and CIO last December and was recently ratified by the CIO Executive Board. It now goes into immediate effect.

The Executive Council declared that it is the policy of the American Federation of Labor to stop inter-union warfare between the rival organizations.

For this reason, President William Green announced, the Council instructed the AFL Peace Committee to seek as the next step toward organic unity between AFL and CIO an agreement preventing "raiding" of established unions.

Such raiding, Mr. Green declared, is against sound public policy, interferes with production and operates against the best interests of the war effort. It should be the organizational policy of both organizations, he suggested, not to move in on plants where the other already is organized and has contractual relations with management.

Other outstanding developments of the annual mid-winter session of the Executive Council during its first week were:

1—Sponsorship by the AFL of a broad new social security program to free Americans from the fear of want and provide economic insurance from "the cradle to the grave."

2—An appeal to President Roosevelt to use his emergency war powers to stop the National Labor Relations Board from proceeding with its destructive action against the Kaiser shipyards in the northwest.

3—Telegraphic message from the Executive Council to Congressional leaders calling for the defeat of all anti-labor legislation which would handcuff labor in carrying out the war production program.

4—Announcement of a membership report by Secretary-Treasurer George Meany showing that the AFL dues-paid membership is now at an all-time high.

5—Receipt of a letter from Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson praising AFL war workers highly for their outstanding service to the nation.

The arbitration pact ratified by the Executive Council provides for the appointment of a committee composed of an equal number of representatives of the AFL and CIO to which jurisdictional disputes involving an AFL union against a CIO union or vice versa can be referred for settlement. If this committee cannot settle the case, it is empowered to name an impartial arbitrator to decide it. If the committee cannot agree on an arbitrator, it can call upon the President of the United States to do so.

Mr. Green declined to speculate on which of a number of pending cases might be referred first to the joint committee when it is set up.

Council Urges President To Stop NLRB Action On Kaiser Shipyards

Miami, Fla.—At the request of a joint committee representing metal and building trades unions, the AFL Executive Council sent a telegram to President Roosevelt urging him to use his powers as Commander-in-Chief to stop the National Labor Relations Board from "interfering in the perfect cooperative relationship which has been established between labor and management at the Kaiser Shipbuilding Company plants" in the Northwest.

The Council declared that the NLRB investigation of the contracts between the Kaiser management and AFL unions at these plants, undertaken at the instigation of the CIO, is bound to create bitter feeling among the workers and lower production. It's telegram to the President follows:

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor now meeting at Miami, Fla., urgently appeals to you to stop the Labor Relations Board from conducting a hearing in the industrial relationship between employers and employes at the Kaiser shipbuilding plants. Unless you intervene the production of ships will be curtailed and serious consequences may follow. No dispute over wages, union recognition or conditions of employment exists between the employes of the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co. and its management. Instead a rival union is seeking to raid American Federation of Labor unions already established as a genuine collective bargaining agency at the Kaiser shipbuilding plants. We regard the intervention of the Labor Relations Board into the situation as a direct attempt to assist and help a rival union to carry out its raiding program at a plant where ship production has reached new heights.

"We have appealed to the board to exercise judgment and discretion, to refrain from creating hatred and bitterness at a shipbuilding plant where harmony and cooperation prevail and where we have called upon the workers to double production. If the Labor Relations Board, a Government agency, will not cease and desist from upsetting production, from lowering efficiency through its application of a stubborn, stupid policy, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor believes that you, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, ought in this great emergency, to stop it.

"We pledge to the Government and we promise you that ship production will increase. We promise you that your goal for ship production will be reached and that every request and every appeal you make for increased production at the Kaiser shipbuilding yards will be met in full measure. All we ask is that our unions be let alone that they be permitted to build ships without hindrance by a Government agency. The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor believes that you have the power to stop the National Labor Relations Board from interfering in the perfect cooperative relationship which has been established between labor and management at the Kaiser Shipbuilding Co. plants.

"This urgent demand is submitted to you because it is highly contradictory to appeal to labor to produce ships without interruption to which appeal labor has responded 100 per cent, while a Government agency acts in such manner as to decrease production, lower morale, develop inefficiency and create confusion and chaos. Mr. President, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, speaking for 6,000,000 workers, urgently requests that you act immediately."

AFL and CIO Invite Chilean Labor Executive To Visit United States

Miami, Fla.—President William Green announced here that the American Federation of Labor and the CIO have jointly invited Bernard Ibanez, Secretary General of the Chilean Federation of Labor, to visit this country as the guest of organized labor.

The invitation to Senor Ibanez preceded the action of the Chilean Government in breaking off relations with the Axis Powers and giving full support to the United Nations.

Mr. Green said it has always been the desire of the AFL to promote friendlier relations between the labor movements of South and Central American countries and labor in the United States. He expressed the hope that the visit of the Chilean labor leader will serve to promote that objective.

When he arrives in this country, Senor Ibanez will discuss mutual objectives and problems with American labor leaders and will be invited to visit various war production plants in this country so that he can bring back to his trade union colleagues at home a first-hand report of America's gigantic war program.